

JACQUELINE OF HOLLAND.

A DRAMA

In Three Acts,

BY

GEORGE FREDERICK SMYTH,

*Author of The Tribute Child; Freaks at Calais; The Turret
Clock; Conscription; Gonsalvo of Cordova;
Trifles light as Air; etc.*

GRAVESEND :

PRINTED BY G. J. BAYNES, HIGH STREET.

1865.

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In Memento of a Friendship which has existed
many years

This Drama is Dedicated to

Charles Smetthurst, Esq.,

By his Friend,

The Author.



DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Philip, Duke of Burgundy.....
Zweder (*Lord Bishop of Utrecht*)
Floris Van Borselen (*a leader of Philip's faction*)
Frank Van Borselen (*son of Floris*)
Ludwig Van Montfort (*a leader of Jacqueline's faction*)
John Vilaine (*an officer in Philip's army*)
Oost, the Dyke Digger (*foster-brother to Frank*)..... ,

ENGLISH.

Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester (*Protector of England*)
Lord Fitz Walter
Jacqueline of Holland
Benina (*companion to Jacqueline*).....

Courtiers, Chamberlain, Guards, Attendants.



The following play is partly founded upon Thomas Colley Grattan's historical romance, bearing the same title. But a perusal of that work will prove that the principal action of my Drama, and the leading incidents therein contained differ widely from its source, and that the main plot and its dénouement is entirely original.

THE AUTHOR.

197, Parrock Street,
Gravesend.



JACQUELINE OF HOLLAND.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*Interior of a Pavilion.*

JACQUELINE *and* BISHOP ZWEDER *discovered seated, they come forward, c.*

BISHOP. See the effects of piety and prayer, my lovely Countess, my much honored daughter. While you encountered peril, I offered up masses for your success, and now here you are, if not arrived in harbour, yet at least your bark is fairly launched from shore.

JACQ. Yes—but upon a wild and stormy sea.

BISHOP.—Go to then, you have a bold and skilful pilot to direct it—The son, the brother, the uncle of a King; himself Regent of all England. When Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, makes you his bride; by the shrine of Saint Willebrod! half the princesses in Europe will envy you.

JACQ. They would withhold their envy, could they but read my heart.

BISHOP. Nay Madam, remember that it is he alone can save your heritage. Who but the royal Gloucester can make head against all-powerful Burgundy? how but by his aid, are your fair towns of Holland, Zealand, and Friesland, to hold their freedom? and I, Zweder, Bishop of Utrecht, what is to become of me, if Philip surprise us without further help? Let me tell you Countess, 'tis I that hold the heaviest stake, for if we fail, the *good* Duke Philip would hang me to a certainty.

JACQ. Reverend Sir, let your anxieties rest on their true basis; I have advanced too far now to recede. You need not learn, that Jacqueline of Holland comes of a race, which has ever feared dishonor more than death.

BISHOP. Spoken like yourself—and now Countess, if you would but rivet one link more, to join us in a chain of common safety, all would then go well. What can be more lucky than my presence here to tie the nuptial knot? and when could you better change the title of an affianced bride, for that of Gloucester's wedded wife?

JACQ. Sir, Count, or Bishop—take your choice of titles—breathe but another word of this, give but another look irreverent or insulting, and, by the blessed Rood! that moment I break up this conference, cut short our project, and trusting my fate to Heaven, will straight return to my poor town of Amersfort.

BISHOP. Why here's a coil! Is it for this that I have ventured my whole temporal good, in your all but desperate cause—am I to be sacrificed to a mere caprice?

JACQ. Hold, Lord Zweder!—my tongue shall never play the hypocrite to my heart—I cannot listen to words of love, when Gloucester is the theme; I love him not, nor loves he me; motives of state and policy alone lead to this marriage, but nothing more. As Humphrey has fought for my poor cause, so do I honor him; but love—Ah me! I never knew it yet, and yet methinks had I—
(trumpet sounds)

BISHOP.—Hark, Madam! 'tis the Duke's trumpet, which signals his approach.

*Enter GLOCESTER, followed by FITZ WALTER and
VAN MONTFORT, L.U.E.*

JACQ. Welcome most gracious Duke! Let your heart interpret my gratitude for this new proof of zeal—I am a beggar even in words.

GLO. Countess, I am here not less by inclination than by duty. I owe it to my honor, as well as to your misfortunes, to give you aid. I have vowed my sword in your service, and by Saint George I'll keep my oath!

JACQ. Thanks your Highness—my good Lord Fitz Walter, and you Sir Ludwig, thrice welcome both; with such support as yours, success may yet be mine.

MONT. Words Madam, are not my wont; be this my pledge
(touching his sword) I'll make it speak for me.

JACQ. Thanks both, and sooth to say, thanks indeed are now the only guerdon that the poorest of princesses has to offer to the bravest of knights.

FITZ WALT. Oh, Madam! they are far, far more than either we desire or deserve. Be assured lady; better, far brighter days are yet in store for you.

JACQ. Let us hope so; but sorry is the return I now can make for all the courteous gallantry bestowed on me and Benina in merry England; when his Highness here did more than honor to my deserts. Instead of a brilliant Court, a splendid palace, gorgeous banquets, and feats of chivalry, I can only offer you a hunter's tent, pitched in a woodland wild; the produce of our bows must be our banquet; and a mock hunting-party to hide our secret meeting.

GLO. Countess, we are too much honored in your service to feel that aught is wanting to ennoble it—Fitz Walter here is ready to couch lance in rest, and run a tilt in your behalf, in a far more glorious field than the narrow lists of Windsor or Westminster. We now must turn our thoughts to sterner, manlier deeds.

JACQ. Ah noble prince! even the sight of that faded favor, which Lord Fitz Walter wears with such constant gallantry in his cap, recalls too well those halcyon days now past. That favor, Lord Fitz Walter, marks an ungracious contrast to your fidelity—it changes color.

FITZ WALT. Which I never shall, as Heaven is my hope!

JACQ. Benina, Benina come forth—

Enter BENINA, L.U.E.

Benina—take my Lord Fitz Walter to your care—She will, I warrant her my lord, give special heed to your discourse, for England's sake, and for your own. Van Montfort too will tend the gallant lord—I would discourse awhile with Gloucester and his Reverence.

BENINA, FITZ WALTER, and VAN MONTFORT, *Exit* L.U.E.

Now gracious prince, come with Lord Zweder and ourselves into our sylvan council-closet. My page must act as chamberlain to this our court. Alas! what bitter mockery does fate too often make of princes and their pomp.

Exeunt JACQUELINE, GLOCESTER and ZWEDER, R.S.

SCENE II.—*The Forest of Drent.*

Enter JACQUELINE, GLOCESTER *and* BISHOP ZWEDER, L.

GLO. In sooth fair Countess, I have no more of moment to impart but this, which you may kindly construe as important—I must away this night to England.

JACQ. To England!

GLO. Ay! by my faith! though sorely against my will; would I might dare to stay and peril my life in this contest; but I am watched by jealous eyes, and Beaufort, that proud prelate, seeks my ruin.

BISHOP. What, will you not fight then in this cause; not lead your troops to quell my factious citizens of Utrecht?

GLO. Reverend Count, I may not lead the troops, even in a better cause than thine—I will fight, but it will be upon another field, ay, to the death. Know Madam, that my duel with your cousin, the tyrant Burgundy, is at length decided on, although the day unnamed. Meanwhile, under knighthood's solemn pledge I am vowed, to take nor give no gage of combat with another. Thus then it is, my good Lord Van Montfort, the brave Lord Fitz Walter, and myself, last night arranged the plan of battle; we will further confer thereon anon; and then, so please you Countess, I must away once more to England.

BISHOP. (*aside to GLOCESTER*) But your Highness, you have not yet said one word upon the main point of all—the contract—the marriage betwixt the Countess and yourself.

(*Bugle sounded.*)

GLO. Hark! by Saint Hubert! see, who comes here?

Enter FRANK VAN BORSELM *and* OOST, R.U.E.

How now good fellows, by what right do you track these forests, bugle on back, and bow in hand?

FRANK. By what right!—by the right of freemen; are we not, as well as you, on the territory of Friesland? Know ye not that it is the right of all Frisons to carry arms when and where they please?

OOST. Ay, and to use them too when need.

BISHOP. (*aside to GLOCESTER*) For the love of our Lady speak them fair! They come of a race of men who have killed more Counts of Holland, and have taken prisoner more Bishops of Utrecht than I have hairs upon my head.

OOST. Say but the word my foster-brother, and I'll soon flay these silken poppingjays.

GLO. Stand back! ye menacing hinds—down with your arms.

OOST stands on guard with his mace.

BISHOP. You are a dead man if you advance one step. Let me speak to him (*to OOST*), my worthy, most respectable, and gentle-looking friend, do I know you; have we not met before?

OOST. We may—but not a very likely chance; you look some pampered butterfly of peace, whilst I have grown grey in many a bloody field of war.

BISHOP. And your name kind comrade, is——

OOST. Oh, I am not ashamed of it!—Oost, the Dyke Digger.

BISHOP. And my name, you remember mine don't you my brave Oost?

OOST. I know nothing of you; and I care still less.

BISHOP. Praised be Saint Willebrod that you don't. And you young gentleman; methinks your face is very familiar to me—say, from whence come ye, and where are you going?

FRANK. We follow our sport in the free forest, nor hold ourselves bound to answer impertinent questions.

BISHOP. (*aside*) Truly a most courteous pair of gentlemen.

JACQUELINE advances to FRANK, R.C.

JACQ. Whither go you fair Sir?

FRANK. (*unbonneting*) Madam, I have already declined to answer that question.

JACQ. Your course seems bent towards Zealand; danger is abroad, the fire of party-feud burns high, and these are troublous times—I fain would know to which side you belong; hold you with Jacqueline or Burgundy? I see you wear no party-badge.

FRANK. I would not have one seen; yet I might be proud fair lady to bear that which should distinguish your friends and followers.

GLO. Courteously spoken, by Saint Paul! and with quite an air and tone of gentle blood. Come young Sir, let us at least know who we have conversed with—What is your name?

FRANK. I have yet to earn a title to my name, although I bear my father's; but be assured proud Sir, that when a fit day

comes, I will not shrink from proclaiming it to any, ay, be they who they may, who then may dare to question me.

GLO. (*aside*) S'dearth, is it not hard I may not throw my gage unto this malapert and most presumptuous youth? Ah! well thought of, Fitz Walter will redeem my challenge. There young and most uncourteous Sir, I fling you my defiance, (*throws down his glove*) dare you to take it up?

FRANK. Dare! (*picks up GLOCESTER'S glove and throws down his own*) Now we are on equal terms at last. I ask not your name, since I am not free as yet to give my own; but, know ye this, you deal with no ignoble man—would that the day were come to meet you either in the open lists, or fair-fought field!—and now, I must from hence; farewell to all, and lady, a fair farewell to thee.

GLOCESTER and the BISHOP retire up the stage.

JACQ. I cannot let him leave in this ungracious way; Sir, we may never meet again, and yet be sure I wish you well—Saint Michael be your shield, when you redeem your pledge with yon redoubted knight.

FRANK. An angel hovering betwixt me and heaven, could not guard me better than with such a prayer.

JACQ. One moment yet, (*taking the jewelled carcanet from her neck*) Wear this—ask not who I am; but if the time should come, when you discover it, remember then that henceforth I shall look upon this day as being one bright spot amidst a whole life o'erclouded by misfortune.

FRANK. Beautiful being! I do not merit this.

JACQ. Keep it—keep it.

FRANK. And this to one who dared not to declare his name?

JACQ. My heart vouches for your nobility—quick, quick, conceal it. (*As FRANK opens his pourpoint, the red cross of Saint Andrew is seen on his breast; JACQUELINE shrieks*) Ah heaven! that fatal badge! rash youth beware! away! away!

Exit FRANK, followed by OOST, R. GLOCESTER and the BISHOP come down.

GLO. The day is waning fast; as soon as night has spread its shade, I must on board again. Come Countess, to while the hour, let me try what sport your forest-depths afford, with horn and hound we'll try to strike a deer, and then for England speed I on my way.

SCENE III.—*A Room in the Castle of Eversdyke.*

FLORIS VAN BORSELEN *discovered looking out of an open Casement, R.U.E. A chair, with canopy, back C. stage.*

FLORIS. Ay! I can make her out now—it must be my brother's boat. There flies our green pennon, with the three silver stars of the Borselen's at the mast head—and by Saint Peter and Saint Paul! there is the red cross of Burgundy at the stern. Come, that's good, that's good—the Duke will not tarry long when his banner flaps the wind—and see! a gallant youth has landed on the shore; so, so, some messenger I trow from good Duke Philip, with greetings from his Grace; let me receive him as becomes the Lord of Eversdyke.

(FLORIS *seats himself.* Enter FRANK VAN BORSELEN, L.)

Welcome, thrice welcome, gentle Sir.

FRANK. Father, dear father!—what know ye me not, your son—your Frank? (FLORIS *comes down C.*)

FLORIS. My Frank! my son is't thou? Come to my arms my boy, my boy; five, five long years have passed since last I pressed thee here. How fares thy master, princely Burgundy? Ah! with what pride I look upon thee; thou do'st not return to thy father's walls a perfumed fop, a silken courtier—no, no, soldier is written on thy gallant form, speaks in thy gesture, and sparkles in thine eye. What ho! within there (*striking on the table with his dagger*)

Enter ATTENDANT, L.U.E.

Let there be holiday and jubilee to all within my castle-walls, ay, and within sight of them too. Broach me some ale and wine casks; stint not, spare not. And do'st hear, I'll hang all I find sober at midnight, over the battlements—there go—fly—tell thy fellows—begone!

Exit ATTENDANT, L.U.E.

Now Frank, tell me the news, hast heard aught lately of that vile adultress, that poisoner, that female fire-brand, that——

FRANK. Who mean you father?

FLORIS. Mean! why who can I mean, but that devil incarnate, the Countess Jacqueline?

FRANK. My dear father, remember, in the first place, she is a woman——

FLORIS. I am not so sure of that Frank; more likely a fiend in a woman's shape.

FRANK. And then again she is unfortunate.

FLORIS. And serve her right—what better luck could befall her. Did she not poison her uncle the Count and Bishop?

FRANK. It was so asserted, but it was never proved. The breath of calumny father, but too often blights the tenderest bud, the fairest flower.

FLORIS. Pshaw! all stuff! Does not the very name of her, and of the foes to our house, make your blood boil, as it does mine? Are you not in heart and soul, in life and death, a hearty hater of her and her vile followers.

FRANK.—Father, I am in heart and head, by feeling as well as by duty, your son; your cause is mine; my life it is my country's; I will uphold the quarrel of my gracious Lord of Burgundy; but, as to Countess Jacqueline, her sex and her misfortunes claim my pity; as to those who espouse her cause, I will meet them in the field as foes, but I cannot hate them as men.

FLORIS. Not hate them! pity for Jacqueline! grant me patience good Saint Willebrod! Am I listening to a son of mine? Oh! Frank, Frank—shame, shame on thee! By the blood of the Borselen's, I doubt you are my son. Not hate the followers of Jacqueline! monstrous, monstrous. Hark ye, young Sir, you must hate them, and you shall hate them, every man, woman, and child of them—ay, hate them like a good Burgundian and a pious Christian.

FRANK. Be not so hasty father; recollect, I am as it were, a stranger in this land; give me time; let me at least learn the more recent causes for enmity towards the hereditary foes of our house, and rest assured, I never shall disgrace the name I bear.

FLORIS. I'll warrant thee thou wilt not. Ah! I know thy blood will rise at last, and I condemned thee too hastily. Thou dost promise me then to hate—

FRANK. I will do my best to obey you in all things.

FLORIS. That's the most sensible thing that you have said yet—say no more, that's enough. What ho there! are the knaves deaf? (*striking on the table with his dagger*)

Enter ATTENDANT, L.U.E.

Tell Fritz Stoop Van Stitchit, the tailor, to prepare instantly;

a cap of the same pattern as mine, bearing the red badge of Burgundy, to be ready at night, for Mynheer Frank's wear at dawn to-morrow.

ATTEND. So please your nobleness, old Fritz is already so drunk, amixing the ale with the wine, that—

FLORIS. Let him get sober then directly, for, by Saint Paul I swear, the cap shall be ready to-night.

FRANK. Nay father, it is not possible for the poor tailor to get sober at your command, although he found it easy enough to get drunk with your permission.

FLORIS. Not possible! who shall dare to be impossible when I command it to be done? By our Lady! Frank, you forget yourself, in more ways than one. Hark ye, sirrah! Let Stoop Van Stitchit make the cap, drunk or sober, or, d'ye hear, by the mass the point of his needle shall be blunt, compared with the sharpness of my wrath.

Exit ATTENDANT, L.U.E.

Odds heart! Frank, I could dance with joy, when I look upon you! But by Saint Paul! what have I been thinking of? I had forgotten that thou art fasting lad, famishing, starving I trow, and I, shame on me, forgetful of thy need. Come Frank, come, the board is spread; but I have no French juncates, no Italian condiments or comfitures to offer you—I have nothing but plain, national food at my board; only good, homely fare, with appetite for sauce. Come Frank, come boy, come.

Exeunt, L.

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*A Chamber in JACQUELINE'S Castle of Amersfort.*

Enter JACQUELINE and BENINA, R.

JACQ. Benina, you speak against your convictions.

BEN. So may the Virgin help me, Madam, I but speak the truth. I cannot see that you have cause for self-reproach; and yet I see you suffer as if you were a criminal.

JACQ. Benina, thou art thyself of noble blood, and thou too lovest—nay blush not my poor maiden; the brave Fitz Walter

is all worthy of thy love—thou knowest well the pure pride of womanhood; and, canst thou hold that I, a princess, am not disgraced by that which would have brought shame upon the simplest tire-woman of my train?

BEN. Heaven witness for me, my loved mistress, I cannot see that Duke Gloucester's conduct can bring shame or reproach to you.

JACQ. No, not reproach, but it brings self-contempt, ay, to my heart's core—I love him not, but yet I feel the scorn of his rejection deeply rankling here.

BEN. Rejection! nay, use not that word. Did not the Duke woo you with all the fervour of a lover?

JACQ. Ay, and now abandons me for scenes of low intrigue and wantonness, sunning himself in fair Dame Elinor Cobham's smiles. Has Jacqueline of Holland lived for this?

BEN. It may not be so Madam, in good sooth, you do yourself dishonour, and, perchance his Highness wrong.

JACQ. Tut, tut, Benina, tell me not so, I saw his perfidy in his glance, the first moment of our meeting in that fatal forest. I swear to you Benina, that never, never shall Gloucester possess my hand. (*aside*) Nor could I now bestow my heart. List to me my heart's sole confidant, for I feel I must pour forth the pent up secret of my soul. The voice of Nature speaking in the balmy Spring, is not more easily understood than Love's first whisperings in a woman's breast; yes, I feel its bright unburning flame, deep in my heart of hearts—and for whom? Alas! alas! for whom?

BEN. Sure not that stranger youth, we met in the forest of Drent?

JACQ. Ay, he, and he alone—a stranger as thou sayest, and more, a follower of Burgundy.

BEN. It cannot be you love such a man! one noteless, without a name when noble Gloucester challenged him. Would not the Countess of Holland have felt the proud blood tingle in her veins?

JACQ. She did feel it, Alas! alas!

BEN. A mere adventurer; an outlaw perhaps, at best some base and low-born hunter.

JACQ. 'Tis false! no, no, nobility was stamped upon his brow, wisdom was in his words, and the pure soul of chivalry was in his bearing. Never, never did love tempt woman in a fairer guise. Impulse, passion, hurried me away to make that fatal gift; oh Benina, Benina, pity your poor mistress!

BEN. Countess, drive this unworthy passion from your breast—Jacqueline of Holland be thyself again—the strong, the firm, the proud. Your secret it is safe with me, but would it be safe in the keeping of that bold, presumptuous youth?

JACQ. It would. I would avouch his honor with my life. But no more of this; let me gain strength to battle with my shame; shame did I say? a blister on my tongue for coupling that word with him; when in his eyes the very soul of honor sits enthroned! Down, down poor swelling heart. Ah! wretched, wretched Jacqueline.

Exeunt, L.S.

SCENE II.—*Council Chamber at the Court of Philip, Duke of Burgundy. Brussels. COURTIER, GUARDS, and ATTENDANTS are grouped around the stage.*

Enter PHILIP and FRANK VAN BORSELEN, L., attended.

FRANK. In brief, my Liege, the Countess Jacqueline, her brother Lewis, of Hainhault, and Ludwig Van Montfort, with the whole force of their faction, are said to be in close conjunction, and maintain the upper hand.

PHILIP. They shall soon be undermost.

FRANK. Hear me out your Highness. A large fleet, with some thousands of English troops—

PHILIP. Ah! what did'st thou say, English troops?

FRANK. Were on our seas when I left Beverland.

PHILIP. Well—well—proceed.

FRANK. And ere I reached the coast of Flanders—

PHILIP. What then? speak on Sir Frank.

FRANK. By this time they must have landed in some of the islands of Zealand.

PHILIP. Let Punic faith be no longer the term for treachery, but English perfidy, with the brand of shame, stand blushing in its stead. You have mentioned this to none?

FRANK. To none, my Liege.

PHILIP. 'Tis well. In one short week my plans shall be arranged. My faithful friends in Zealand and in Holland, will soon check this rash invasion; and my veteran troops from Flanders—

FRANK. Are already opposed to the enemy.

PHILIP. Then all goes well. Now tell me, how sped you in your recent Friesland mission?

FRANK. As well as heart could wish your Highness.

PHILIP. Enough—Then let Gloucester beware, and stand upon his guard. But you have not said what news from Eversdyke; how fares your father, the gallant good old Knight?

FRANK. He heartily greets your Highness—and bade me place this packet in your hands. (*FRANK upon opening his pourpoint to give the packet to Philip, discovers Jacqueline's carcanet round his neck.*)

PHILIP. Ah! what is it I see? it cannot be—and yet—(*PHILIP snatches the chain from FRANK'S neck*) It is—it is the very same. Oh shameless hypocrite! thou household, deep unblushing traitor.

FRANK. Traitor! What means your Highness?

PHILIP. Traitor—ay most manifest and wicked traitor! Could there be evidence more convincing than this? (*casts the chain on the floor and stamps on it*) Thus perish every type of her—the wanton-one. Thus be her cause and her trodden down; so may she who gave, and he who dared to wear it, be crushed beneath my vengeance. Guards—looks well to your prisoner; watch well this bosom-nourished serpent—to the dungeon with the ingrate—away with him—away.

(*Curtain down.*)

SCENE III.—*Interior of a prison; FRANK discovered.*

FRANK. Do I deserve this treatment at his hands? I, true, honest, faithful to him to the last—I to be treated like a felon, at the very moment when I both merited and expected praise and honor! What can it mean? Yet perhaps this is not all undeserved—that fatal chain! who or what can she be? her for whose sake I wore the gift; her whose wondrous beauty thrall'd my heart, whose lovely form is ever present to my thoughts. I deemed 'twould prove an amulet against all ill—Alas, it has proved the passport to my ruin. And yet, although I know the Duke to be passionate—

The DUKE enters, unperceived by FRANK, from the Back Stage.

head-strong and rash; still, still he is not unjust—he will not punish without proof of guilt; his rage subdued, I know that he will hear me 'ere that he condemns.

PHILIP *comes forward.*

PHILIP. You do me justice—I have been too hasty, and, I hope I may add, unjust—Come, take this ungloved hand, not to press it to your lips in mere etiquette of Court favor, but to grasp within your own, the pledge of my regret, the gage of my esteem. (FRANK *shrinks back and folds his arms.*) What! do my eyes deceive me? Lives there the man who hesitates to take the hand, the proffered hand of Philip, Duke of Burgundy? Does my own servitor—my vassal's son—

FRANK. Hold! for your own sake Duke Philip—utter not another word to overflow the measure of the wrong, the bitter wrong, which you have done to me. I am innocent, innocent of all crime, yea, even in thought—yet you have outraged my hitherto untarnished name; proclaimed me traitor before your assembled court; and now, how offer you to salve the wanton wound? Your hand in privacy! No, no, my noble prince, wash out the stain in the broad stream of public retractation; or, if I am still accused of aught unworthy knighthood, let me prove my honor in your open lists, ay, with the best and bravest of your Court.

PHILIP. Sir Frank, one word—by knighthood's vow; in honor's name; tell me, how came you by that carcanet?

FRANK. When late in Friesland, on special secret service for your Highness, in the depths of the forest of Drent, I chanced upon a small encampment, set up in hunter's style; hounds with their keepers, armed with arbalist and bow were there—

PHILIP. And the hunters?

FRANK. A lady, beauteous as Diana's self, accompanied by two foreigners of proud and warlike mien; a gross fat man was also there, who more like tonsured priest than hunter looked; these, with an aged warrior, a Hollander methinks, composed the company. On parting, the gentle lady called me aside; bade me kind farewell, invoked Saint Michael's benison on me, and then, like to some angel breathing light and love, she threw that jewelled chain around my neck.

PHILIP. Ah, the mystery is dissolved! By chance, Sir Frank, you have picked up the clew of as deep a plot as ever was laid in a forest glade. Your hunting-party was no mean one; and now I recognise them all. Your chief personages were Zweder of Utrecht, Humphrey of Glocester, and your Diana, is my fair errant, warlike-cousin, Jacqueline of Holland.

FRANK. (*aside*) Ah Jacqueline! that paragon of beauty; the heroine of the age; the affianced of princes! She, the giver of that gage which had cinctured her lovely form—she, whose eyes looked into my heart's deepest cell, and left the rays of love bright burning there!

PHILIP. You are rapt in pleasant fancies good Sir Frank—awhile give heed to me. That chain which I discovered on your breast, in by-gone days of young affection, was clasped by my hand, around the neck of her, who was my more than playmate and my cousin. And now that I have told thee this, can'st thou not forgive my momentary suspicion, the heedless wrong which I did to thee?

FRANK *kneels and kisses the DUKE'S hand.*

FRANK. My kind, my more than gracious master!

PHILIP. Rise, rise to my heart, (*embraces FRANK*) and now take back this fatal gift. (*The DUKE restores the carcanet to FRANK.*) Sir Frank Van Borselen, plight me thy knightly word thou wilt restore it to the Circe who bestowed it.

FRANK. (*kissing the hilt of his sword*) I pledge my knight-hood's oath I will.

PHILIP. 'Tis well, now link thy arm with mine, and thus before my assembled Court shalt thou appear; thy honor stainless, bright as noon-day sun, shall again blaze forth; true, faithful and unspotted as before.

END OF ACT II.

ACT III.

SCENE 1.—*A Garden at JACQUELINE'S Castle of Amersfort.*

JACQUELINE *discovered seated, R.U.E., she comes forward, c.*

JACQ. The vision is dissolved, and the bright prism shattered! He is lost to me for ever, no chance of meeting ere again! Oh pride, pride, where art thou now? Lost, lost to me ere found—snatched away ere clasped!—and he my foe, hating perchance my very name, and vilifying the heart which bleeds for him.

Enter FRANK VAN BORSELEN, disguised, cloak, &c., L.U.E.

FRANK. 'Tis she—Countess Jacqueline—

JACQ. Ah he is dead!—and this his spirit comes to warn me that my hour is nigh.

FRANK. Countess Jacqueline, I am here to fulfil a duty, a sacred mission.

JACQ. Thank Heaven!—he lives, he lives! this joy it is too much.

JACQUELINE, *overwhelmed by her feelings, is near falling, when*
FRANK *catches her in his arms.*

FRANK. My light—my life—my Jacqueline!

JACQ. Oh they will kill thee if they find thee here! how found you entrance within my castle walls, where, if discovered, you doom yourself to ruin?

FRANK. To ruin—ay, too true. What oracle is it that thus speaks the word which marks my doom.

JACQ. Fear not, your risk it shall be mine; the blow which is aimed at you shall strike through me, and we will stand or fall together.

FRANK. Lady, this has been a trying moment for us both; I sought your presence with no presumptuous view; and if a sense of my danger, did for a moment force you into the betrayal of too keen a sensibility; oh Madam! regain your dignity, as I will endeavour to recover my place.

JACQ. Away with place, dignity, and false distinctions! This is no time for cold and formal phrase—Your place is found, 'tis here, here in my heart—that heart which bids me tell how much I honor, nay, how much I love you.

FRANK. Love! Oh Jacqueline you madden me—the path of duty drives me to despair. Look here, here—(*pointing to the red cross of Burgundy.*)

JACQ. Ha! how then came you here, and wherefore?

FRANK. I am here to redeem an oath, at the behest of honor and of chivalry; and now lady behold this precious gage, how dear it has been to me, no words can tell. Say then, save by my own hand, how could I return it to her who placed it here?

JACQ. Return it—and why return it, why not wear it still? the feeling which prompted the gift is throbbing now more warmly than before.

FRANK. (*aside*) Oh agony! my oath to Philip! Assist me Heaven! Lady I have worn your gift both worthily and well; had I never known it yours, mortal man should never have forced it from me; but being yours, it is not for me to bear a token which belies my duty; my vow to Knighthood; and to my liege lord.

JACQUELINE *receives back the carcanet*

JACQ. Speak on, you can say nothing now to do me deeper harm.

FRANK. Your words pierce to my heart's core; I will retire and leave you to forget you ever met me.

JACQ. Stay, explain this cruel conduct—cruel as it perhaps is just.

FRANK. I urge not my fealty to my prince, or my fidelity to my family creed (for I am not, cannot be your foe) but as a soldier and a knight, can I wear the gift of one whose hand is pledged to Gloucester—whose heart is in the keeping of another—ay, and if report belie you not, whose love perchance is shared by more—

JACQ. Ah! (*weeps.*)

FRANK. Pardon my speech; the open heart prompts the candid phrase—I grieve to see thee suffer. Oh Jacqueline! silence my tongue for ever, lift a whole mountain's-weight from off my breast—say thou art innocent, all innocent of that which Rumour bruits against thee—speak but one sentence of denial, one word to justify—

JACQ. Denial! justify! And is it come to this? Is Jacqueline of Holland sunk so low to be accused and summoned?—and by thee! Oh God what have I done to deserve all this? How durst thou put such base words into such vile form of speech? Thou, a nameless man, a hireling of traitorous Burgundy.

FRANK. Nameless! Frank Van Borselen no longer seeks to hide his name, he only grieves that chance ere threw him in your way.

JACQ. A noble name, although that of my bitterest foe. Hear me Sir Knight, that chance meeting may as easily be forgotten as it occurred. It can cost me but little to efface so slight a stain on my memory.

FRANK. Erewhile I should not have thought so.

JACQ. That smile of too-ready triumph may turn to mortification yet. And now, Sir, you are free to retire; your mission

of insult is accomplished; so make your passage from my walls at once, as best you may.

FRANK. I leave you Countess; my good sword shall carve a passage through those dangers which, as your words imply, are ready to oppose my safe retreat.

JACQ. Dangers! I threatened none; I wish you none—Heaven be my pledge! But go, go, since you think so basely of me—but let it be in safety; hide that hateful badge, a hundred deaths await thee if thou art discovered.

FRANK. I court not, Madam, nor shun I death.

Exit FRANK, L., JACQUELINE, R.

SCENE II.—*A Chamber in JACQUELINE'S Castle of Amersfort.
An open Casement, R.U.E.*

Enter BENINA and VAN MONTFORT, L.

BEN. Your looks bespeak you come the messenger of dire mishap.

MONT. Ah! gently break the news I bear to Countess Jacqueline.

BEN. Tell, tell me all.

MONT. Your Lady's tyrant cousin, hated Philip (who may Heaven in his mercy keep from hence) has overcome the English troops, as well as those under my command—all, all is lost—a handful of followers and myself are all that have escaped the battle-field. Go seek your mistress, tell her this fatal news, this ruin to her cause. I cannot find the heart to tell the tale myself—but list! some one approaches—I wish not to be seen.

Exit BENINA and VAN MONTFORT, R.

Enter FITZ WALTER and ATTENDANT, L.

FITZ WALT. At length in safety! Oh what a mingled tumult is raging in my breast—defeat and shame is struggling with love, all-powerful love! Oh Jacqueline! the fair, the queenly Jacqueline, she was the magnet which drew me to these walls. How do I wish yet dread to meet her presence. 'Tis true her lips have never spoken words of love; and yet,

this favour, precious, priceless gift, worn ever since the tourney held at Windsor—it bears her colour, and surely it was her own. (*To the ATTENDANT*) Go seek your mistress, the Countess Jacqueline, say that one escaped the battle-field would crave her presence here.

Exit ATTENDANT, L.

Be still my throbbing heart. Oh how I long yet fear to look upon her again !

Enter JACQUELINE, L.

JACQ. Who do I see—my Lord Fitz Walter ?

FITZ WALT. What may I read Madam in this surprise, this deep emotion ? Dare I to hope ? Oh ! most noble, most enchanting of women, in what words may I pour out my whole soul before thee ? how give utterance to my boundless adoration ? (*kneels*) Let an angel's voice pardon my presumption, in kneeling at thy feet, and telling thee how truly, how fondly that I love thee.

JACQ. Rise, rise my Lord—well do I know how deep is the debt of gratitude I owe you—presumptuous you cannot be, when unkind fate has levelled all distinctions. Despoiled, destitute, abandoned, on whom may Jacqueline of Holland now look down ? For such as I am now, there is but one gift should make an union with me desirable—my heart—and that my Lord Fitz Walter, is no longer mine—nay, grieve not, 'tis lost, but not to enrich another; all is as desperate for me, as it is hopeless for you.

FITZ WALT. Countess, you have awoke me from a long and deeply-cherished dream of hopes and fears—take back your favour; I restore it to you pure and unsullied.

JACQ. This, Lord Fitz Walter, is but error heaped on error—I never gave that favour—it was never mine.

FITZ WALT. Not yours ! it was thrown to me from your pavilion, at the great tourney given at Westminster.

JACQ. Most true, but by my dear Benina's hand; she it was who bestowed it on you, and with it, the proudest meed to a brave man—the heart of a beautiful and virtuous woman.

FITZ WALT. Her heart, said you ?

JACQ. Ay, verily my Lord; her heart, whole, unseathed and innocent; a prize far worthier than that which you but dreamt of erewhile. What gratitude do you not owe to her for such a love ? what dishonor to disavow the flame you have unwittingly both fanned and fostered.

FITZ WALT. Countess you probe my heart, yet raise my self-esteem and sooth my wounded pride. How angel-like you beam upon me in this new aspect of perfection!

JACQ. Look from yon casement—see my Lord. Look where Benina stands, her soft cheek mantling like the perfumed rose she plucks—Is not innocence, beauty and grace enough to make you happy? I give her to you in all her charms; wear her and cherish her in your heart—and mark, she sees you now—away to her—nay, away, away.

Exit FITZ WALTER, R.U.E.

Enter ATTENDANT, L.

ATTEN. A stranger knight, but just arrived, craves audience with your Grace.

Exit ATTENDANT, L.

JACQ. My heart it tells me the truant has returned. 'Tis Frank Van Borselen come to seek forgiveness at my feet. Where is my bitter scorn, and my hot anger now? Drowned and forgotten in floods of tenderness and love!

(Curtain falls.)

SCENE III.—*The Council Chamber in PHILIP'S Court at Brussels. A Canopy of State. COURTIER'S, ATTENDANTS, and GUARDS grouped around the Stage.*

Enter PHILIP attended with JOHN VILAINÉ, R.

PHILIP. Well my good and trusty John Vilaine, how sped you with Sir Frank Van Borselen?

VILAINÉ. Following the orders of your Highness, strict watch was kept upon him. At yester's early dawn of day, he secretly left his chamber, with his own hands saddled a fleet horse, nor bridle drew until he arrived at Castle Amersfort.

PHILIP. I guess the lure which caused this rapid flight.

VILAINÉ. We followed quickly on his track, entering the castle portal almost as soon as he.

PHILIP. And you arrested him in my name?

VILAINÉ. Ay, my Liege.

PHILIP. And found him—

VILAINE. Sooth to say your Highness, we found him at the feet of Countess Jacqueline.

PHILIP. By my halidome! I cannot blame his taste; but John, good John, we must act cautiously in this matter. Be sure ere long the Countess will be here, seeking her love-lorn Knight; for women's fears point ever to the worst. Art sure John you have him quite secure?

VILAINE. In one of your Highness's deepest and dampest cells, so please you.

PHILIP. By the rood! but it does not please me John; no, no, John, we must keep him high and dry. We must not risk an ague or a rheumatism to so precious a deposit for Jacqueline's utter ruin and downfall.

VILAINE. Ruin, my Liege?

PHILIP. Tut, tut, man—what see you not my scheme? does not your fertile brain pierce my wily plot? Mark me, should it fall out that Jacqueline of Holland marries Frank Van Borselen, does she not forfeit all her feifs, and shall not I gain three earldoms, as sure as she will then lose all claim to three provinces? No, no, Vilaine, go, go at once; bring him into your own quarters; feed him on the rarest and the best; spare not of regal Burgundy nor choice Champagne; I wish not to spoil his looks, and be sure, good John, a well-fed lover ever pleases best his lady fair.

Exit JOHN VILAINE, R.

Enter PHILIP'S CHAMBERLAIN, L.

CHAM. My gracious Liege, the Countess Jacqueline awaits without, and craves instant audience with your Highness, on matters of high import.

PHILIP. Stay awhile—(PHILIP *seats himself in the Chair of State*) Now show the Countess Jacqueline to our presence.

Exit CHAMBERLAIN, L.

Enter CHAMBERLAIN, L., *ushering in* JACQUELINE.

JACQ. Your Highness! Cousin! Philip! one word—one word in mercy—speak—Does Frank Van Borselen live? speak Philip, or by all the host of Heaven I swear my blood shall be on thy head (*draws her dagger.*)

PHILIP. Hold Jacqueline! hold—he lives, he is safe!

JACQ. Oh God of mercy be praised! (*throws away the dagger.*)

PHILIP. Calm thyself Jacqueline, and list to me—'Tis worse than useless to recall the past; you have shot your arrow a too-lofty flight, and it has missed its aim. Your troops are all dispersed; the remnant of the English army ere this have sought their native shore. What then remains to you! it is a harsh, a bitter word, but it must be spoken—submission.

JACQ. I know that I have placed myself within your power, and you may use me as you list. No thoughts of regal sway or state now fill this anguished breast—Frank Van Borselen is in your power—he is your prisoner—Oh Philip, I ask not of his crime, but spare, Oh! spare his life, and on these knees which never bent before to man—

PHILIP *prevents JACQUELINE kneeling.*

PHILIP. Forbear—but why this wild emotion for his fate? Can it be?—but no—Does Jacqueline of Holland love this youth?

JACQ. Love him!—that word is cold and passionless! I'd die for him to prove my adoration.

PHILIP. That were a test indeed. List my fair cousin, and heed me well. Upon your acceding to certain terms proposed by us, we might consent to spare Van Borselen's life.

JACQ. Oh name them quickly!

PHILIP. Sign me an abdication of all your rights and privileges in Holland, Zealand, and Friesland—you to retain your title as Countess to those provinces. And further, that you do consent to retire into private life, at your own domain of Amersfort. The deed is here, and only waits your signature.

JACQ. That done—Van Borselen's life is safe?

PHILIP. Here in our open Court, to that we pledge our princely word.

JACQ. Give me the deed--

JACQUELINE *retires to R.U.E., signs the Deed, and presents it to PHILIP.*

'Tis done! If it had been an universe, I would have signed it all away to save him.

PHILIP. (*to ATTENDANT*) Bid John Vilaine bring Sir Frank Van Borselen to our presence.

ATTEND. They wait without my liege.

Exit ATTENDANT.

Enter FRANK VAN BORSELEN and JOHN VILAINE, R. JACQUELINE throws herself into FRANK'S arms, exclaiming:

JACQ. Saved ! saved ! and mine again once more !

PHILIP. Have you complaint to make Sir Frank of undue harshness from your jailer ?

FRANK. Not so my gracious Liege; good Sir John has gently done his duty.

PHILIP. Ay, Sir Frank Borselen, and now will we do ours. Brave heart and gallant Knight, now will thy prince and friend reward thee for the past. Behold this badge, the proudest gift my gratitude can bestow—kneel to thy Liege—

FRANK kneels. PHILIP takes off his own chain of the Order of the Golden Fleece, and places it round FRANK'S neck.

Thus do I make thee one of the noblest order which Christendom can boast—worthily I know thou'lt wear it, may'st thou wear it long. Now art thou in brotherhood to princes; and in meed of thy true services and friendship tried, I name thee Lord of East and West Horne, of Masterdyke and Bulle—I make thee Governor and Count of Ostervent—

FRANK. Hold, hold, my sovereign Lord; load me not with praise and payment beyond my due.

PHILIP. Yes, one gift more, the brightest, costliest, worthiest, and the best—my cousin's hand, it shall be thine—I give not mere consent, but I command ye to become this day one—myself will give away the bride. And for that deed so lately signed, to shew thee Jacqueline, that Philip of Burgundy, although called covetous, headstrong, and rash, can yet be both liberal, just and true, this will I tear—

PHILIP takes up the deed, as if to destroy it, but JACQUELINE prevents him.

JACQ. No Philip, no—never again such power shall be mine. Ambition, worldly pride, I now abjure ye. I'll hold no sway save over one noble heart, who though mistrustful once, will not now refuse to wear my gift, to bind his faith for ever with my own. (*Takes the carcanet from her neck places it round FRANK'S.*)

FRANK. Forgiving angel!
And this to me, to me who dared to wrong
Thy noble nature, and to doubt thy truth!
Oh Jacqueline! say, can all this be real,
Or am I not the sport of phantasy,
And this some wild delirious dream of joy,
Too bright to last, too blissful to be true?
And yet thy gift, thy precious gift is here,
Safe pillow'd on my breast—and that fond look—
It brings conviction, tells the raptured truth,
Thou'rt mine for time, yea for eternity!

JACQ. Then let us bid farewell to pomp and pride,
True joy is ever found in privacy—
The crown I crave to deck my temples now,
Is that which lightly binds the brow of Peace.
In lieu of dower from your Jacqueline,
She gives the priceless treasure of true love;
Thou need'st not seek a proud pre-eminence,
For Honor, peerless Honor, is thine own.

Disposition of the Characters at the Fall of the Curtain.

PHILIP, R. JACQUELINE, C. FRANK, L.

FINIS.

